

# FIVE AMERICAN WOMEN WHO HAVE SUNG THE PART OF ISOLDE



MME. NORDICA



MINNIE SALTZMAN-STEVENS



MARION WEED



MME EDYTH WALKER

OLIVIA FREMSTAD

Although American sopranos have not limited themselves to any particular field of lyric art it is a fact that few of them have attempted the rôle of *Isolde*. So small is the number of those who have sung the part that all of them are pictured here.

Two of the American sopranos shown here as *Isolde* have never sung the rôle in this country. These are Marion Saltzman-Stevens and Edyth Walker. As matter of fact Miss Walker was regarded as a mezzo-soprano during her engagement at the Metropolitan Opera House and sang that rôle. It was only after her return to Germany that she undertook the soprano rôle.

Miss Walker's refusal to consent to Heinrich Conzelmann's refusal to allow her to graduate from the mezzo-soprano rôle that led to her return to Europe. Olivia Fremstad, who was simple Olivia in those days, was more patient. She remained in New York and was finally graduated out of the mezzo-soprano class.

Both came here as contraltos from the German opera houses, in which they had sung the low voiced rôle. Edyth Walker came here from Vienna and Olivia Fremstad from Cologne.

The first of the American *Isolde*s was Lillian Nordica. She alone had sung the rôle in the Metropolitan Opera House in the time that Marion Weed took the rôle in the place of Milka Ternina at a Saturday matinee under the direction of the late Felix Mottl.

Mme. Nordica's first appearance as *Isolde* was regarded as rather a notable event in the history of the Metropolitan Opera House. It took place on November 27, 1895, and gathered additional significance from the fact that Jean de Hezke for the first time sang both in German and French. There were other significant details of this performance which have already made Mme. Nordica an important figure in the history of opera in this country.

When Abbey & Gray came into power

the Wagner operas were excluded from the repertoire of the Metropolitan Opera House. When Walter Damrosch made his great success with his German season there the fact that New Yorkers still loved the German operas was impressed on those managers. So they engaged a company and gave Wagner operas on special occasions.

As the artists engaged for this troupe were inferior to the singers in the French and Italian wing there was naturally little or no interest on the part of the

audience in the performances. But when Mosses, Jean and Edouard de Hezke decided to appear in "*Tristan and Isolde*" with Mme. Nordica and Mme. Brema there was no longer any question as to the standing of the artists that were to sing the Wagner repertoire at the Metropolitan. German opera was no longer to be treated as a stepchild, but was welcomed into the full fellowship of the repertoire. It took the great success of Mme. Nordica and her associates in this eventful performance to put Wagner

that she appeared as *Isolde*, and she has since then been more than ever admired for her admirable performance of the rôle. Olivia Fremstad was not born in this country, but as she came here as a child of 7 she must count among the American *Isolde*s.

In the Chicago company is the latest of the American *Isolde*s. This is Marion Saltzman-Stevens, who appeared twice in the part at Covent Garden during the season of German opera there last year.

She is a native of Bloomington, Ill., and like Cornelia Rider Kelley, the other Illinois soprano, she was at work as a clerk in a large grocery store which she went up to Chicago five years ago and heard a performance of "*Die Walküre*" given by the company from the Metropolitan Opera House. She had always had a voice and had sung in a church choir from the time she was old enough. She determined after her experience at the opera to study for the stage, whatever sacrifice she might have to make.

She got together enough money to go to Paris, and there went to study with Jean de Hezke. Later her money was exhausted and she was forced to look for employment. With the assistance she obtained she was able to continue her studies and ultimately succeeded in making her first appearance in London during the German season at Covent Garden. Since that time she has progressed steadily.

Marion Weed began her operatic career in Germany at the Stadt Theater in Hamburg, where Edyth Walker was at the time a dramatic soprano rather than a contralto. Lillian Nordica, Minnie Saltzman-Stevens and Marion Weed were all ways sopranos.

## Catholic Work on New Lines

### Chapel Car for the South—Training School for Mission Workers—the Women's Auxiliary.

Catholic leaders in America are adopting new methods of work. Some of these methods bear familiar names but all are changed to fit Catholic needs. Thus there are a Catholic Church Extension Society, a Catholic Missionary Union, a Catholic Foreign Mission Society and a Catholic Women's Auxiliary.

At the head of the Church Extension Society is the Archbishop of Chicago, the Most Rev. Dr. James E. Quigley, who was Bishop of Buffalo from 1897 to 1903 and was promoted from that office to the Chicago see. The society prosecutes home mission work along the usual lines of course, but it also prosecutes it along some unusual lines.

The usual methods are represented in many small churches it has helped to build in the West. The society is tremendously interested, for example, in the New Mexico region and in the great Northwest. Not long ago some non-Catholic home mission societies made a study of conditions in Colorado. They reported that in that State a third more towns were provided with Catholic churches than with Protestant churches. It is a safe guess that this showing is due in part to the Extension Society.

The president of the society is the Rev. Dr. Francis C. Kelley. A specimen of his new methods is a chapel car. The society has had such a car for some time travelling on the railroads in the West. Now it is to have a second car to travel on the railroads in the South.

The new car is to have all of the latest improvements. The interior will look like the interior of a small church. There is an altar of approved pattern, and with seats for a congregation of fifty or sixty and there is to be carried, to put up as needed, a vestible with steps from which entrance can readily be obtained from ground or platform to the car.

This chapel car is practically a travelling church. The railroads had the cars free. The priests pick up the cars as often as the priests desire and drop them off wherever there is a siding. It is announced in advance that the chapel car is coming to the town. Of course the priests come with it. Its visits to the towns are fairly regular. Out of these visits there come in time permanent

influences have assisted, but it is fair to say that the union's influence has been the controlling factor in the whole undertaking.

Last year, in connection with the university, but with the mission house as the headquarters and the priests cooperating with Father Doyle as leading spirits, between two and three hundred sisters attended a summer school. There have come to the house also Catholic leaders from England and Australia, and through their study of the work done there they have been led to establish a similar house in England and the starting of mission bands there. Not long ago the Pope recommended to Catholic clergy of France the founding of these mission bands, employing the successful American model.

Making experts in church work is comparable with experts in government, educational and commercial service. The new thing about the work of the union is that it applies training along new lines to priests who are not members of the religious orders. The new lines are particularly American, aimed to meet American conditions. The same training is afforded members of the orders, but emphasis is placed at the mission house at Brookland upon training of workers to go out under diocesan Bishops.

It was not long ago that the United States was taken out of the Vatican's list of missionary countries and the Catholic Church here placed upon the same administrative footing as in the older countries of Europe. Along with this advance has come, among other things, a greatly widened vision of world responsibility on the part of the church in this country. One of the great missionary societies of the world is that of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. It is of French birth, with headquarters in Lyons and main offices in both Paris and Rome. France gives by far the largest share of the money which it raises each year.

The work of this society is worldwide. Its gifts have strengthened Catholic efforts in India, China and almost all so-called heathen lands. Within the last few years the United States has come to the financial support of this society. Gifts of American Catholics are \$200,000 a year, and steadily increasing.

Without at all affecting seriously the American work of this society there has just been started here a Catholic foreign mission society. This is an American enterprise, fully approved by the Pope but started on American plans. The Archbishops inaugurated it and the Rev. James A. Walsh and the Rev. Thomas Price, two young American priests, one of them from the South, were selected to lead it. They went to Europe and there learned all that was to be had from expe-

## NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN'S COURT IN NEW YORK

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some of the workers in the court room. There was no place. Finally through one of the big sisters a place was found for her in the house of a clergyman as a domestic. The part of domestic was absolutely impossible for her. She had instinctive good taste and an artistic nature. She might have become a good milliner or something where her love for pretty things could express itself. But as a domestic it may mean her ruin.

Prof. Kirchwey urged the necessity for a psychological and medical clinic operated in connection with the court and under the jurisdiction of the justice.

"How can justice be done a child of 15 who looks his age and is so treated, but whose mind is really developed only to the age of 8 or 10?" said Prof. Kirchwey. "A very large portion of these delinquent children are sub-normal mentally. It is especially so with the girls. Most of the women in the Bedford Reformatory are there because of immaturity. Many are mentally deficient. A large percentage are decidedly sub-normal."

The real juvenile court needs a psychopathic and medical clinic conducted as a part of it. The pathology of the child delinquent should be known to the justice in deciding the case. Then a child whose mind has advanced only half as far as his body can be properly treated."

Prof. Kirchwey said that Chicago maintains a psychopathic and medical clinic as a part of its court. In Philadelphia every child has a physical examination in a medical clinic.

A boy in Chicago had been brought to the court several times. His case was a puzzle. His parents were Poles and little English was spoken in the home. Finally the boy was turned over to Dr. Healy of the court psychopathic clinic for thorough examination. Then the riddle was solved.

The boy had an abnormally developed mind along scientific lines. There was nothing in his home that satisfied his craving for scientific, especially electrical knowledge; so he had to get it elsewhere. He had read much on science in the libraries. He had a gang that he would lead on scientific expeditions, breaking into power houses to show them how the machinery worked or into an electrical outfit's to steal apparatus that he experimented with. It was his mania.

four of the court. He must be under constant supervision. This can only be brought about by a thoroughgoing physical system."

The most pressing need of the court is, enable it to do effective work immediately along modern lines, continued the professor, is probation officers. There is not one in the city employ for the children's court in Manhattan and there is only one in Brooklyn and one in Richmond and Queens. Eighteen have been provided for, but their appointment is being held up by the Board of Aldermen and Prof. Kirchwey. The city needs 50.

"How could the modern system get hold of the boys of the city as the present court does not and cannot?" continued Prof. Kirchwey. "A plan has been drawn for the division of the city into twelve districts or so, each having a branch of the children's court located in it, to be presided over by a semi-judicial officer of the court to deal with the minor offenders and to learn the district and its children's gangs."

"Boys in contact with a man they respect and who is interested in them lead in casual conversation stories that reveal shocking conditions. Boys will do things that a man they believe in asking them. Judge Lindley sends some police officers to jail without guard. They go because they respect the judge and respect his confidence in them. It is so with the boys."

"Through the work of the right men in such positions, knowing the lives of the boys, gangs could be got at. Their leaders if degenerated could be weeded out and sent away if they could not be got at in other ways. The court at present gets at the boys in one way. Under such a plan it could get at them in forty ways."